



Federal Parliamentary Interfaith Breakfast

16 November 2023



ACU

AUSTRALIAN CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY

COVER IMAGE

Dean Bowen

Born 1957, Australia.

Comet over the Sea II, 2014 (detail)

Oil on Board

Height 35 cm x Width 122 cm

Donated through the Australian Government's Cultural Gift Program by Dean Bowen

Australian Catholic University Art Collection

PROGRAM IMAGES

This program features a selection of photographs taken at ACU's Parliamentary Interfaith Breakfasts from 2014 to 2022



Message from the Vice-Chancellor and President



I would like to extend a warm welcome to you in joining us for Australian Catholic University's 2023 Parliamentary Interfaith Breakfast.

Almost a decade ago, when we launched this event, we had a vision of bringing together leaders from across the religious and political spectrum in a celebration of the diversity and tolerance that holds our nation together.

Since then, the Parliamentary Interfaith Breakfast has become a stalwart of our dedication to open dialogue, where conversations can take place that concern our democracy, our community, our culture, and the role that faith plays in our everyday lives.

Leaders from multiple faiths, representing the rich religious and cultural lives of Australians, and dozens of parliamentarians from across both chambers and representing the nation, take the time to break bread together in a gesture of acceptance and unity as we foster a culture of tolerance and harmony.

Often what passes as public debate can descend into bruising division and distortion of ideas. And yet, the presence here today of the faith, parliamentary and community leaders demonstrates a determination to bring respect and tolerance to this Parliament, to houses of worship, and to the Australian community.

It is the mark of a very strong foundation of trust, love and dignity that we continue to affirm and embrace the values of a democracy for the multitude of communities, cultures and faiths of Australian life.

This gathering provides an opportunity to promote understanding and a sense of connection between all those who are present, and to demonstrate our mission in action – namely, to foster an appreciation of the sacred in life, and a commitment to serving the common good. And to present a time for healing our national soul.

Professor Zlatko Skrbis

Vice-Chancellor and President
Australian Catholic University



Order of proceedings

Welcome by Master of Ceremonies

Mr Ashley Midalia

Director - Government, Policy and Strategy
Australian Catholic University

Welcome to Country

Mr Paul Girrawah House JP
Ngambri-Ngunnawal Custodian

National Anthem

Mr Ivan Greguric
ACU Student

Speaker's Welcome

The Hon Milton Dick MP
Speaker of the House of Representatives

Prayer before the Meal

Sr Giovanni Farquer rsj

Breakfast Served

Interfaith Prayers and Readings

Government Address

The Hon Chris Bowen MP
Minister for Climate Change and Energy

Opposition Address

The Hon Peter Dutton MP
Leader of the Opposition

Interfaith Prayers and Readings

Closing Remarks

Mr Ashley Midalia



Mr Ashley Midalia **Master of Ceremonies**

As Director of Government, Policy and Strategy at Australian Catholic University, Ashley is responsible for maintaining the University's relationships with government, overseeing its public policy work and ensuring it is well placed to respond to evolving regulatory environments.

Prior to joining ACU, Ashley worked as a commercial lawyer, a journalist at the Australian Financial Review and as a senior political adviser.



Mr Paul Girrawah House JP **Ngambri-Ngunnawal Custodian**

Paul Girrawah House has multiple First Nation ancestries from the South-East Canberra region, including the Ngambri-Ngurnmal (Walgalu), Pajong (Gundungurra), Wallaballoo (Ngunnawal) and Erambie/Brungle (Wiradyuri) family groups. Paul is a Board Director of the Ngambri Local Aboriginal Land Council and a Member of the Indigenous Reference Group, National Museum of Australia, Paul works on country with the Australian National University as a Senior Community Engagement Officer.



Mr Ivan Greguric **ACU Student – BA LLB**

Ivan was awarded the ACU Ramsay Scholarship and is in his first year of Bachelor of Arts (Western Civilisation) Bachelor of Laws degree. He is an active member of student life on campus as the Secretary of the Liberal Arts Society, a member of Life Choice North Sydney and is in the process of establishing a Liberal Club starting in 2024.

Ivan was a Chorister in the St Mary's Cathedral Choir during his primary and secondary education, and is involved in his local parish, running Children's Liturgy and Altar Serving regularly.



The Hon Dugald Milton Dick MP **Speaker of the House of Representatives**

After finishing his studies at the University of Queensland, Milton went on to work as an adviser in the Federal Government before working at both local government levels. Milton previously served on the Brisbane City Council as the representative for Richlands Ward from 2008-2016.

In 2016, he was elected as the Federal Member for Oxley, and has since been re-elected in 2019 and 2022.

Milton was elected as the Speaker of the House of Representatives in July 2022. Milton is passionate about civics education and increasing accessibility and awareness across the country. He wants to ensure the Australian Parliament is more inclusive and open to Australians of all walks of life.

Milton is deeply proud to represent the community and electorate of Oxley, and is a patron of many local sporting, community and service clubs.



The Hon Martin Daubney AM KC **ACU Chancellor**

The Honourable Martin Daubney AM KC is the fifth Chancellor of Australian Catholic University (ACU).

He served as a judge of the Supreme Court of Queensland from 13 July 2007 to 31 December 2021. He was also President of the Queensland Civil and Administrative Tribunal from October 2017 until November 2021.

He has served on a wide range of community and philanthropic boards, including two terms on the Senate of the University of Queensland and his current appointment as a member of the Queensland Art Gallery Board of Trustees.

Mr Daubney has served the Catholic Archdiocese of Brisbane on the Archdiocesan Finance Council (since 2011; Chair since 2018). He was National Vice-President and Queensland Chair of the Australian Association of the Sovereign Military Order of Malta (2009-2014; 2016-2017).



Prayer before the Meal

Conscious of our identity as members of the same human family, let us together open our hearts and minds to that Creative Power eternally at work within and beyond our human frailty.

Let us relish the opportunities presented to us this morning

to share this food together in friendship and conviviality,

to advance in mutual appreciation of one another,

to respect and relish our differences as well as what we have in common,

to grow in courage and nobility of character and work in harmony to expand our awareness of the complexities of the human story, its tragedies and triumphs.

Let us remember especially those in our midst and throughout the world, men, women and children, who at this moment suffer unspeakable horror, indignity, fear, hardship, degradation and abject misery. May your transcendent and healing power descend upon them and may your regenerative Spirit rescue and revitalize them.

May we reach out with renewed courage and compassion to lift the burden of those with whom we journey and to reignite in one another the spark of hope for a world where all humanity will live together in righteousness.

Amen.

*Submitted by Sr Giovanni Farquer rsj
Director, Commission for Ecumenical and Interfaith Relations
Catholic Archdiocese of Sydney*



Keynote speakers





The Hon Chris Bowen MP **Minister for Climate Change and Energy**

Chris grew up in Smithfield in Western Sydney, attending Smithfield Public School and St Johns Park High School. He graduated from the University of Sydney with a Bachelor of Economics. He also has a Master's Degree in International Relations and a Diploma in Modern Languages (Bahasa Indonesia).

He joined the Labor Party in 1988 and was elected to Fairfield Council in 1995, serving as Mayor of Fairfield 1998 and 1999. He also served as President of the Western Sydney Regional Organisation of Councils from 2000 to 2002.

Chris entered Parliament in 2004 and has held a range of portfolios including serving as Treasurer, Minister for Human Services, Minister for Immigration, and Minister for Small Business.

He is currently the Minister for Climate Change and Energy.



The Hon Peter Dutton MP

Leader of the Opposition

Peter Dutton is the Federal Member for Dickson and Leader of the Liberal Party.

Peter began his working life working part time after school in a butchers shop, mowing lawns and throwing newspapers until starting university. He started a small family business which grew to proudly employ 40 Australians.

For nine years, Peter served his community as a Queensland Police Officer. He worked in the National Crime Authority and Drug and Sex Offenders' Squads, with a focus on protecting women and children.

First elected to the Australian Parliament in November 2001 at age 30, Peter became one of the youngest Ministers since Federation when appointed to the Ministry by Prime Minister John Howard in 2004. In January 2006, he was promoted to become Peter Costello's Assistant Treasurer.

Following the 2007 election, Peter served as Shadow Minister for Finance, Competition Policy and Deregulation, and Shadow Minister for Health and Ageing.

In the nine years following the Coalition's return to Government in 2013, Peter held a number of major portfolios.


He was a member of the National Security Committee of Cabinet for a marathon six years, and also served on the Expenditure Review Committee and leadership teams.

Most recently, Peter served as Minister for Defence. In this role, he delivered record funding and secured the vital equipment our service personnel need to keep our country safe.

Previously, he served as the inaugural Home Affairs Minister in its modern form from December 2017, with responsibility for the Australian Federal Police, Australian Border Force, Australian Security Intelligence Organisation, Australian Criminal Intelligence Commission and the Australian Transaction Reports and Analysis Centre.

Peter has also previously served as the Minister for Immigration and Border Protection, deporting criminals and overseeing Operation Sovereign Borders, and Minister for Health and Minister for Sport, where he established the \$20 billion Medical Research Future Fund.

Peter is married to Kirilly and is the proud father of Rebecca, Harry and Tom and lives in Dayboro in the Dickson electorate.

A person wearing dark pants and brown shoes is walking away from the camera on a paved path. The path is composed of large, rectangular tiles, each engraved with a large, white, sans-serif letter. The letters visible are 'S', 'M', 'T', 'H', 'E', 'R', 'S', 'B', 'U', 'T', 'A', 'T', 'T', 'H'. The background is a bright, out-of-focus green area, possibly a lawn or garden.

“Everyone prays as they know how, as they can, according to what they have received from their own culture. We are not praying against each other, this religious tradition against that one, no! We are all united as human beings, as brothers and sisters, praying to God according to each one’s culture, according to each one’s own tradition, according to each one’s own beliefs, but brothers and sisters praying to God, this is what is important!”

**Morning mass in the chapel of the Domus Sanctae Marthae
Homily of His Holiness Pope Francis**

Day of fraternity, day of penance and prayer

14 May 2020

Interfaith prayers and readings



Anglican

Prayer for Reconciliation

Lord God, bring us together as one,
reconciled with you and reconciled with each other.

You made us in your likeness,
you gave us your Son, Jesus Christ.

He has given us forgiveness from sin.

Lord God, bring us together as one,
different in culture, but given new life in Christ,
together as your body, your Church, your people.

Lord God, bring us together as one,
reconciled, healed, forgiven,
Sharing you with others as you have called us to do.

In Jesus Christ, let us be together as one. Amen.

From: A Prayer Book for Australia, © The Anglican Church of Australia Trust Corporation, 1995, Broughton Publishing, Mulgrave, Victoria.

*Submitted by The Right Reverend Carol Wagner,
Assistant Bishop and Vicar General,
Anglican Diocese of Canberra & Goulburn*

Baha'i

O God, my God! Cast upon this gathering the glances of Thy loving-kindness. Keep safe each and all in Thy custody and under Thy protection. Send down upon these souls Thy heavenly blessings. Immerse them in the ocean of Thy mercy, and quicken them through the breaths of the Holy Spirit.

O Lord! Bestow Thy gracious aid and confirmation upon this just government. This country lieth beneath the sheltering shadow of Thy protection, and this people is in Thy service. O Lord! Confer upon them Thy heavenly bounty and render the outpourings of Thy grace and favour copious and abundant. Suffer this esteemed nation to be held in honour, and enable it to be admitted into Thy kingdom.

Thou art the Powerful, the Omnipotent, the Merciful, and Thou art the Generous, the Beneficent, the Lord of grace abounding

Abdu'l Bahá, The Promulgation of Universal Peace

*Submitted by Dr Natalie Mobini-Kesheh on behalf of the
The Australian Baha'i Community*

Buddhist

Prayer of Lovingkindness

May I be happy and find joy in life

May I be well, safe and free from suffering

May I appreciate and find joy in loving myself and others

May I experience ease and contentment

May my family and friends be happy and find joy in life

May they be well, safe and free from suffering

May they appreciate and find joy in loving themselves and others

May they experience ease and contentment

May all beings have the opportunity to experience love and kindness

May they have ease and relief from disaster and suffering

May they be safe and healthy and held with high regard and understanding

May our minds, eyes and hearts open to the distress of others

May we respectfully ease any heavy burdens

May we bring empathy and openness to that which we find difficult to understand

May violence fall away from our thoughts, and

May our spirit lift our hearts so that we are able to abide in this world with kindness, empathy and a generosity that encourages peace.

*Submitted by Venerable Tenpa Bejanke Duim NEM
Australian Sangha Association*



Chaldean Catholic

As morning dawns, we praise you, Lord, for you have saved your whole creation.
In mercy grant a day of peace; bestow forgiveness for our sins.

May you not ever cut off hope, nor shut the door before our face.
Do not withhold your care from us; for you alone know our weakness.

Sow love and peace and harmony: uphold our priests and calm our kings, heal all
our sick and guard the strong; forgive the sins of all mankind.

Make us all worthy O Lord, in your grace and mercies, to rejoice and delight in the
glorious light of your revelation and the joyful dawning of your coming, that which
all the creatures you have created look to, hope for and await, with all the true sons
of your Mysteries in the Jerusalem above, Amen.

Seasonal Hymn from the Chaldean Liturgy
Sunday morning Prayer

*Submitted by Most Rev Amel Nona
Archbishop of Eparchy of St Thomas the Apostle in Australia & New Zealand*

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints

Our Father in Heaven,

We thank thee for the country in which we live. We are grateful for the freedom we have to celebrate diversity and the liberty to live our lives according to our conscience.

We are grateful for leaders who uphold values of respect, fairness and morality. We ask that thou wilt bless our elected representatives with wisdom, judgment and compassion; that they may engage in thoughtful and courteous discourse on matters pertaining to individual conscience and collective rights. We pray that human dignity may be recognised for everyone who lives in this land and that we may move on as a nation stronger than before.

May we also remember the circumstances of those who cannot enjoy religious freedom. We pray that thou wilt inspire us to exhibit charity and kindness, and to open our arms to those in need.

In the name of Jesus Christ, Amen.

*Submitted by Emily Tin Wun Kwok on behalf of the
The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*

Churches of Christ

This Book of the Law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do according to all that is written in it. For then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have good success. Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be frightened, and do not be dismayed, for the LORD your God is with you wherever you go. (Joshua 1:8-9).

Father, we thank you for the Christian heritage of this nation. It has shaped the foundations and principles that have made our country great. As we continue to see a bright future built for Australians from all backgrounds and races, we are grateful for your guiding hand, leading us to better love and serve those around us in accordance with your will.

We honour and worship you with passionate devotion. We pursue our heartfelt commitment to enact biblical justice, grace, humility, and mercy. Guide our thoughts and actions each day, that we might please you more. Lead us by your eternal Spirit who raised Jesus from the dead and who makes us come alive with a faith that sustains, propels, and inspires.

May we embrace your call to live a life centred on the risen Christ, always looking forward to eternity, but living in the light of it each day.

Lord, while your breath fills our lungs, we choose to seize every opportunity to make a difference that would honour you, living each moment in your strength to bring you all the glory.

Amen.

*Submitted by Rev Dr Rob Nyhuis
Chair
Churches of Christ Council in Australia*



Coptic Orthodox

At the beginning of our prayer today, we would like to acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of the lands in Australia and pay our respects to their past and present Elders.

Faith is essential to a human's life, as faith is confidence in what we hope for and assurance about what we do not see¹. We trust faithfully in God through the prayers of religious leaders and their congregations that He blesses scientific institutions. We would like to thank the Australian Catholic University for organising this gathering. May God provide wisdom to politicians, economists, and judges; give power to the Australian Army, and bless all health institutions and charity organisations in Australia, and may the relationship between Australia and other countries be balanced.

We pray faithfully to God to interfere in a manner that we do not see, to prevent natural disasters, such as fires, earthquakes, and epidemics. We pray that world and organisation leaders, such as the United Nations, United Nations Security Council, and other world organisations, all unite in wisdom to protect our planet, control climate change and its damaging impacts, and that they contribute to ending wars that spread in many countries around the world, taking a toll on the economy worldwide, destroying places, killing thousands and displacing millions.

We pray, in the name of our God, our Lord, our Saviour, our Redeemer, Jesus Christ, glory to him forever.

*Submitted by His Grace Bishop Daniel
Coptic Orthodox Church, Diocese of Sydney-Australia & Affiliated Regions*

¹ Paul's letter to the Hebrews 11:11



Greek Orthodox

Psalm 102 (103)

Bless the Lord, my soul; and all that is within me, bless his holy name!

Bless the Lord, my soul, and forget not all that he has done for you.

He forgives all your iniquities. He heals all your infirmities.

He redeems your life from corruption. He crowns you with mercy and compassion.

He satisfies your desire with good things, so that your youth is renewed like the eagles.

The Lord performs deeds of mercy, and justice for all who are wronged.

He made known his ways to Moses, his acts to the children of Israel.

The Lord is merciful and compassionate, slow to anger, and abounding in mercy.

He will not always strive with us, nor will he keep his anger forever.

He has not dealt with us according to our iniquities, nor has he rewarded us according to our sins.

For as the heavens are high above the earth, so great is his mercy toward those who fear him.

As far as the east is from the west, so far has he removed our iniquities from us.

As a father has compassion upon his son, so has the Lord compassion upon those who fear him.

For he knows what we are made of, he remembers that we are dust.

*Submitted by His Grace Bishop Bartholomew of Charioupolis
Archiepiscopal Vicar of Canberra
Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of Australia*

Hindu

Source

Om Dyauh Shanti is the prayer from Yajur Veda. This is the universal peace prayer. We all are connected, the sky, the earth, the nature and everything there. We pray for peace inside and outside. Chanting this peace mantra with the intention to pervade peace in all the creatures, gods and us within. This is an excellent mantra to meditate. Shanti mantra is chanted to calm the mind of the reciter and the nature around her/him. Traditionally, a Shanti mantra ends with three recitations of “Shanti”, which is believed to remove obstacles and calm the three reals: Physical, Divine, and Internal.

Prayer

ॐ द्यौः शान्तिरन्तरिक्षं शान्तिः

पृथिवी शान्तिरापः शान्तिरोषधयः शान्तिः ।

वनस्पतयः शान्तिर्विश्वेदेवाः शान्तिर्ब्रह्म शान्तिः

सर्वं शान्तिः शान्तिरेव शान्तिः सा मा शान्तिरेधि ॥

ॐ शान्तिः शान्तिः शान्तिः ॥

Om Dyauh Shaantir-Antarikssam Shaantih
Prthivii Shaantir-Aapah Shaantir-Ossadhayah Shaantih
Vanaspatayah Shaantir-Vishvedevaah Shaantir-Brahma Shaantih
Sarvam Shaantih Shaantir-Eva Shaantih Saa Maa Shaantir-Edhi
Om Shaantih Shaantih Shaantih

Meaning

I meditate on the Peace which pervades the three divisions of the universe - Dyauh (Heaven), Antariksha (Intermediate Space) and Prthivi (Earth).

May peace transmit there in the entire sky just as in the tremendous ethereal space all over the place.

May peace rule all over this world, in water and in all herbs, trees and creepers.

May peace stream over the entire universe. May peace be in the supreme being Brahman, Absolute Consciousness;

Also, may there consistently exist in all peace and peace alone.

Aum peace, peace, and peace to us and all creatures!

Submitted by Prakash Mehta

National President, Hindu Council of Australia

Jewish

May the God of our ancestors Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, Sarah, Rivkah, Rachel and Leah give His blessings of peace and unity and may these grace the land of Australia and extend to all corners of the world. May humanity find solace in harmony and understanding, transcending differences to create a tapestry of compassion and mutual respect.

As we stand beneath the Southern Cross, we pray for guidance and wisdom to navigate the challenges that beset our planet. May the light of hope dispel the shadows of strife, and may the bonds of friendship link us all in a shared destiny of goodwill.

In this vast expanse of diversity, may all of humankind be blessed with tranquillity and concord. Let us strive for justice, cherish kindness, and walk hand in hand toward a future of togetherness and of a kinder world.

*Submitted by Rabbi Yaakov Glasman
Senior Rabbi, St Kilda Hebrew Congregation
President, Rabbinical Association of Australia*





Lutheran

Lord of eternity, God of the ages, giver of grace – Father, Son and Holy Spirit – we praise you for your care, your bountiful provision. Thank you for our First Peoples, and wonderful natural habitat. Thank you for the harvest in Australia, and bless it as it is gathered in and distributed for the good of all. Bless leaders of government, industry and community working for what is best for our whole society. Guide us all in the varied callings you have given us. Jesus, incarnate within our world, be especially with all who suffer, and those who care for them. Having experienced, yourself, being homeless and a refugee, we pray for all who are homeless or housing challenged, for those struggling just to live, in Australia and throughout the world. Bring safety for refugees, and an end to human selfishness, greed and conflict. We pray for all movements of deeper reconciliation. Holy Spirit, you groan in and with creation. We are sorry for our heavy human footprint on planet earth. Bless and guide united world efforts in creation care. Renew the earth and make us better stewards of your gift of creation. Lead us to be lovers and protectors of the life you have breathed. May all know your gift of daily bread. Make us a place where love comes to life. Our thanks, our prayers, our laments, our intentions and our actions, we bring to you in the name of Jesus. Amen.

*Submitted by Rev Darren Jaensch AM
On behalf of the Lutheran Church of Australia*

Maronite Catholic

Heavenly Father,

In this moment of grace and unity, we gather before You with hearts filled with gratitude and hope. We are humbled by the opportunity to come together in mutual respect and dialogue.

We acknowledge the uniqueness of every faith tradition and we offer our thanks for the privilege of being together in this sacred gathering, where differences become bridges and dialogues transform into pathways of harmony.

We beseech You, Lord, to bless us with open hearts and receptive minds.

May our conversations always be marked by humility and may they ignite a passion for unity that reverberates far beyond this gathering.

May we always be inspired to work together for the betterment of our societies, lifting the marginalised, healing the wounded, and uplifting the downtrodden.

Grant us the strength to continue to transcend the boundaries that separate us, recognising the shared values that underpin our beliefs and action—love and compassion. May these always be the light that shines brightly in a world often overshadowed by division.

In Your encompassing love, we find hope. In Your boundless wisdom, we find guidance. In Your eternal presence, we find unity.

May the Lord Bless you all, through the intercession of Our Lady the mother of God St Maroun and all the saints. Amen.

*Submitted by Most Rev Antoine-Charbel Tarabay OLM
Maronite Bishop of Australia, New Zealand and Oceania*

Methodist

Prayer of St Francis of Assisi – Prayer for Peace

Lord, make me an instrument of your peace:
where there is hatred, let me sow love;
where there is injury, pardon;
where there is doubt, faith;
where there is despair, hope;
where there is darkness, light;
where there is sadness, joy.

O divine Master, grant that I may not so much seek
to be consoled as to console,
to be understood as to understand,
to be loved as to love.

For it is in giving that we receive,
it is in pardoning that we are pardoned,
and it is in dying that we are born to eternal life.

Submitted by Reverend Dr Rex Rigby

*National Superintendent of the Wesleyan Methodist Church of Australia
Indigenous Elder, Bigambul & Kamilaroi Nations*



Muslim

In the Name of Allah the Most Merciful and most Compassionate

Assalamu Alaikum Warahmathullahi Barakat - Peace be Upon you with God's mercy and Blessing!

I have decided to dedicate the readings to the First People of Australia and speak against racism and to reaffirm the role of mankind in the protection of the environment we live in.

For Muslims this traditional greeting when meeting a fellow Muslim or entering a home is acknowledging the owners of the place. We also do that when we enter a mosque and thus it is quite natural for us to acknowledge the traditional owners and custodians of this land we call home, Australia.

“And it is He who sends down rain from the sky, and We produce thereby the growth of all things. We produce from it greenery from which We produce grains arranged in layers. And from the palm trees – of its emerging fruit are clusters hanging low. And [We produce] gardens of grapevines and olives and pomegranates, similar yet varied. Look at [each of] its fruit when it yields and [at] its ripening. Indeed in that are signs for a people who believe.” Quran, 6:99

“And there is no creature on [or within] the earth or bird that flies with its wings except [that they are] communities like you. We have not neglected in the Register a thing. Then unto their Lord they will be gathered.” Quran, 6:38

God talks about the beauty of his creations both on land, sea, and the skies, and he talks of the similarities and bridge between humans and animals through communities. The Qur'an reminds us about how the rights of all creations need to be respected.

“Remember when your Lord said to the angels, ‘I am going to place a successive human authority on earth.’” Quran 2:30

Humans were created to be stewards over all of earth and it is a sacred trust given to humans by Allah to safeguard the environment and all creations on earth.

Islam talks of respect to all mankind in this verse:

“O mankind, indeed, We have created you from male and female and made you into diverse nations and tribes so that you may know one another. Indeed, the most noble of you in the sight of God is the most righteous of you.” Quran 49:13

Finally, I would like to quote from last sermon of our beloved Prophet Muhammad (Sal) on Mount Arafah

“All mankind is from Adam and Eve, an Arab has no superiority over a non-Arab nor a non-Arab has any superiority over an Arab; also a white has no superiority over black nor a black has any superiority over white except by piety and good action.”

Submitted by Commissioner Mohamed Mohideen, OAM, JP

Victorian Multicultural Commission

Immediate Past President, Islamic Council of Victoria

Deputy President, Faith Communities Council of Victoria



National Council of Churches in Australia

Reconciliation Prayer

Holy Father, God of Love.

You are the Creator of this land and of all good things.

We acknowledge the pain and shame of our history
and the sufferings of our peoples,
and we ask your forgiveness.

We thank you for the survival of indigenous cultures.

Our hope is in you because you gave your Son Jesus
to reconcile the world to you.

We pray for your strength and grace to forgive,
accept and love one another,
as you love us and forgive and accept us
in the sacrifice of your Son.

Give us the courage to accept the realities of our history
so that we may build a better future for our nation.

Teach us to respect all cultures.

Teach us to care for our land and waters.

Help us to share justly the resources of this land.

Help us to bring about spiritual and social change
to improve the quality of life for all groups in our communities,
especially the disadvantaged.

Help young people to find true dignity and self-esteem by your Spirit.

May your power and love be the foundations
on which we build our families, our communities and
our nation,
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

*Prepared by Wontulp-Bi-Buya Indigenous Theology Working Group,
13 March 1997, Brisbane*

*NCCA shared this prayer with Churches for a national day of prayer for
reconciliation between Indigenous and Non Indigenous Australians on
Sunday 30 November 1997.*

*Submitted by Ms Elizabeth Stone
General Secretary
National Council of Churches in Australia*

Quakers (Religious Society of Friends)

Within our own, and in neighbouring countries, people of goodwill seek to know and to worship God in ways other than those of Christianity. Do we listen to their insights with open hearts and minds, recognizing that we do not possess all the Truth, but only a part of it? Do we think of these neighbours with acceptance? Do we seek knowledge and understanding of their beliefs and the Light which is theirs?

*From **Advices & Queries**, a compilation of Australian and British Advices and Queries, published by Australia Yearly Meeting, Religious Society of Friends in Australia (2008)*

*Submitted by Co-Clerks Jonathan Benyei and Susan Rockliff
Canberra and Region Quakers*

Roman Catholic

Let us pray for our political community that the “good” for which the political community strives must not be opposed to the “good” of persons but, rather, must always provide the appropriate general framework for their development.

“I beg the Lord to grant us more politicians who are genuinely disturbed by the state of society, the people, the lives of the poor! It is vital that government leaders and financial leaders take heed and broaden their horizons, working to ensure that all citizens have dignified work, education, and health care.” Pope Francis (Evangelii Gaudium 205)

*Submitted by Most Rev Christopher Prowse DD, Archbishop of Canberra Goulburn
Catholic Archdiocese of Canberra and Goulburn*





Roman Catholic

God of all creation,

We gather this morning in your name and under your protection. You are the source and origin of all that is good, and you make known your wisdom and your power in the wonders of your creation. The countless stars in the heavens are but a glimpse of your creative energy. The intricacy of the simplest flower unveils a little of your wisdom and beauty. The thirst for knowledge and understanding planted in the hearts of human beings speaks of your desire to make yourself known to us. The yearning for peace and justice which animates many people speaks of your dream for the whole of your creation.

As women and men of faith, may we recognise the demands our faith makes upon us: to be carers of your creation; to recognise in each other sisters and brothers who share a common dream for your people; to stand in solidarity with each other in defending the poorest and most vulnerable of our sisters and brothers in the human family; to not allow our different understandings of you to drive us apart. May our lives be always marked by gratitude for all that we have been given, and by generosity in sharing all that we have with others. May all our encounters with others lead them to know you as you are, because they see in us reflections of your goodness, your love, and your creative and life-giving energy.

Amen.

*Submitted by Most Rev Timothy Costelloe SDB, Archbishop of Perth
Catholic Archdiocese of Perth & President of Australian Catholic Bishops Conference*

Sikh

A Sikh prayer of blessing

The word ‘Sikh’ translates to ‘student’ and as Sikhs, we are on a continuous learning journey.

*Pavan guru paanee pitaa, Maataa dharat mahat
Divas raat du-i daa-ee dayaa, Khaylai sakal jagat*

**Wind is the teacher, Water is the father, and Earth is the great mother.
Day and night are the two kind nurturers, and (the world) plays under them.**

*Changi-aaiiaa Buri-aaiiaa, Vaachayi dharam hadoor
Karmee aapo aapanee kay neday kay door*

**The record of good and bad deeds is read out in the presence of the Lord of Dharma.
According to their own deeds, some draw closer, some are driven away.**

*Jinee naam dhiaaiyaa, Gey masakat ghaal
Nanak tay mukh ujalay, Kaytee chhootee naal*

**Those who have meditated on the Name of the Lord,
And departed after having worked by the sweat of their brow,
O Nanak, their faces are radiant (when in God’s court)
And many others are saved along with them.**

Guru Nanak Dev Ji, the first embodiment of Divine Light in the Sikh tradition, laid the foundation for a sacred vision for the environment in the above composition. We honour this wisdom by believing that all humans have an intrinsic sensitivity to the natural world, and that such a sustainable society is possible, where water, air, land, forests, and biodiversity remain vibrant, living systems for our generation and for future generations.

Further, we pray and thank the Almighty for the prosperity and peace Australia is blessed with, we thank the First Peoples of Australia for caring for these lands for centuries and welcoming us to this Country.

We pray that our political leaders are blessed with wisdom, discernment, courage, perseverance, humility, integrity, self-control, and desire to serve, learn, and always put the environment and Australian people first and make our world a better place.

*Submitted by
Vickram Singh Grewal
National Sikh Council of Australia*



Sukyo Mahikari

Prayer for an era where all life is revered

The creator God spent an unimaginable period of time with an earnest prayer to create everlasting peace on this earth. God created everything from nothingness by combining the unseen lifeforce with physical matter.

The creator God has given life to all living things on earth. Life is irreplaceable and every life shines brilliantly without bias. Whether it is a human, an animal, a bird, fish, plant or even the tiny organisms living in the soil, all forms of life have been equally blessed by God.

All human beings hold a precious divinity within. No matter how much there may be differences in views or beliefs, we can overcome these differences and live a way of life that can bring happiness and show respect to each other.

Currently humankind is living in a way that will surely lead to the destruction of the balance in nature and the eradication of life on this earth which God created. I pray that people can commune with nature and listen to the voice of nature so that we may be able to find a new path in which humans co-exist with nature.

May dialogue and exchange between people broaden as each person respects the divinity of one another. I pray that an era will come in which humans will be able to listen to the voice of God and the people of the world can give priority to the happiness of others.

Humankind is now trying to open the door to a new era. Let us continue to pray sincerely and no matter the difficulty, let us progress towards creating a new civilization that respects all life equally.

*Submitted by Kazuhiro Fukui, Regional Director
Sukyo Mahikari Australia–Oceania Region*

Uniting Church

Gracious God, Holy Wisdom

We give you thanks for the gift of creation
for its wonder, beauty and diversity.

Give us the gift of your Holy Spirit to guide us
that we might work to repair the beautiful broken creation and nurture a world the cry of
creation is heeded.

We give you thanks for the gift of human community
which nurtures our sense of belonging and allows us

Give us the gift of your Holy Spirit to guide us
that we might build communities of inclusion and justice where all have a place and
everyone has what they need

We give you thanks for the gift of these lands now called Australia
and for all First Nations people who have cared for their country since creation.

Give us the gift of your Holy Spirit to guide us
that we might be a nation that faces the truth of its history in order to build a future
grounded honest repair of the past and present.

We pray in the name of Christ, our bright morning star. Amen

*Submitted by Rev Sharon Hollis
President, Uniting Church in Australia*



Federal Parliamentary Interfaith Breakfast



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Australian Catholic University

An ACU education builds on the Catholic understanding of faith and reason working together in pursuit of knowledge and promotion of human dignity and the common good.

An ACU education seeks to transform lives and communities. Students are challenged to look beyond the classroom, solve real-world problems, develop their own search for meaning and cultivate strong professional ethics. They are invited to stand up for people in need and causes that matter.

ACU is open to all. As is common with great Catholic institutions the world over, the university is inclusive and supportive of everyone, every day – regardless of their faith or tradition.

ACU is a young university making a serious impact. We're ranked in the top two per cent of universities worldwide and in the top 10 Catholic universities. The university has seven campuses around Australia, a campus in Rome, Italy, and an online campus – ACU Online.

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